

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 5286

EXDIS

FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, PINT, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: SAPU REVIEW OF NEXT STEPS

1. SUMMARY: GRAHAM AND I LUNCHEd WITH JOSIAH CHINAMANO AND WILLIE MUZARURWA ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, IN SALISUBYR. THEY CHOSE TO TAKE THE LINE THAT NOTHING HAD HAPPENED DURING THE LAST WEEK AND THEY STILL BELIEVED THAT PRIVATE TALKS BETWEEN SMITH, NKOMO, AND MUGABE WOULD BE NECESSARY PRIOR TO AN ALL-PARTY CONFERENCE. WHATEVER HAD HAPPENED IN THE INTERVAL WAS NYERERE'S FAULT. END SUMMARY.

2. CHINAMANO SAID HE HAD JUST TALKED WITH NKOMO BY PHONE. HE AND MUZARURWA PASSED OFF THE RHODESIA AIRLINE CRASH AND MURDER OF SURVIVORS, AS WELL AS THE SITHOLE LEAK OF THE SECRET MEETING BETWEEN SMITH AND NKOMO ON AUGUST 14, AS THOUGH NEITHER, WHILE UNFORTUNATE OBSTACLES ON THE PATH
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TOWARDS A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, WOULD STAND SERIOUSLY IN THE WAY. WE ASKED WHO THEY THOUGHT HAD PASSED THE INFORMATION TO SITHOLE. THEY WERE QUICK TO PIN THE BLAME ON NYERERE, WHO THEY SAID ALSO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR BLOCKING THE PROGRESS OF THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS' MEETING OVER THE WEEKEND. NYERERE COULDN'T STAND TO HAVE OTHERS TAKE THE LEAD. HE WANTED

TO GET CREDIT FOR ANY SETTLEMENT ACHIEVED IN RHODESIA AND WAS ANGRY AT THE INITIATIVE TAKEN BY KAUNDA AND NIGERIA; THEREFORE HE SET HIMSELF AGAINST A FURTHER MEETING WITH SMITH AND TRIED TO TAKE OVER THE NEGOTIATIONS. IT WAS TIME, SAID CHINAMANO, THAT SOMEBODY POINTED OUT PUBLICLY, AS NKOMO HAD DONE THE SAME MORNING, THAT TANZANIA WAS NOT A FRONT LINE COUNTRY. GRAHAM NOTED THAT NYERERE WAS NOW APPARENTLY INSISTING THAT SMITH ACCEPT THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS AS A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION PRIOR TO AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING. WE HAVE ALWAYS TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THERE WOULD BE NO PRE-CONDITIONS TO AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING. CHINAMANO SAID THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE NYERERE SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO TAKE OVER THE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. CHINAMANO URGED THAT WE CONTINUE TO CAPITALIZE ON THE PROGRESS WHICH WE HAVE MADE TOWARDS STIMULATING SUPPORT FOR AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING. HE THOUGHT THAT A PRIOR MEETING BETWEEN SMITH, NKOMO AND MUGABE WOULD BE NECESSARY, BUT THAT IT COULD BE FOLLOWED SHORTLY BY AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING. WE ASKED WHETHER HE THOUGHT MUGABE WOULD GO ALONG WITH SUCH A PLAN NOW THAT THE INITIAL MEETING HAD BEEN REVEALED. IT WAS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT HE HAD NOT YET AGREED TO ACCEPT THE SECOND POSITION IN A UNIFIED PATRIOTIC FRONT. CHINAMANO SAID THAT MUGABE HAD TO ACCEPT SUCH A CONFIDENTIAL

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POSITION. HE HAD NO STRONG POLITICAL ORGANIZATION INSIDE THE COUNTRY AND NO SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL FOLLOWING. HOWEVER, HE HAD A RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE OF HIS UNCONTESTABLE MILITARY STRENGTH.

3. CHINAMANO THOUGHT IAN SMITH WAS STILL CONVINCED THAT HE SHOULD FOLLOW THE PATH OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH NKOMO TO AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE INITIAL MEETING HAD STRENGTHENED SMITH'S HADN WITH THE WHITES WHO HAD BEEN CRITICAL OF LACK OF PROGRESS AND DIRECTION. NOW THE WHITE COMMUNITY, WHICH ALL ALONG HAD SUPPORTED BRINGING NKOMO INTO THE SETTLEMENT, RECOGNIZED THAT SMITH WAS WORKING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. CHINAMANO URGED US TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION WITH NKOMO IN LUSAKA.

4. COMMENT: WE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT CHINAMANO WAS GIVING US THE ZAPU POSITION RATHER THAN AN OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION. HE CLEARLY REFLECTS NKOMO'S VIEW, WITH WHOM HE HAD JUST SPOKEN BY PHONE, AND NKOMO'S RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS. BUT CHINAMANO

RECOGNIZED THAT WE WERE NOT INVOLVED IN THE INITIAL MEETING AND SUGGESTED THAT WE CONTINUE TO REMAIN SEPARATE FROM THESE DIRECT MEETINGS. HIS REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THAT MUGABE MAY HAVE INCREASED HIS OPPOSITION TO INTEGRATION OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND FURTHER TALKS WITH SMITH MAY INDICATE THAT HE AND NKOMO ARE PREPARED TO PROCEED ALONE IF NECESSARY. THIS, HOWEVER, IS PURE SPECULATION.
EDMONDSON

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